

January 25, 2011

To Whom It May Concern in the Legislature:

I am writing to ask you not to consider cutting funding for Department of Public Health and Human Services Child and Family Services Division. The Child Protective Specialists, their Supervisors and Superiors are in the trenches each and every day trying to prevent child abuse and neglect, which sometimes is too little too late when reports are not made.

The decision to remove children and place them in an unfamiliar environment, even when it is necessary to protect, is a difficult call. These decisions should not be determined by funding, but what is in the best interest of the children.

All agencies are vying for the same dollars and all can present their justifications for an increase. Please do not overlook the most vulnerable population of our great state of Montana – children that are in danger of abuse or neglect or have suffered at the hands that should protect them instead of harming them. Where will they learn that hands and words are for healing, not hurting? If funding is decreased, the options will become more limited than they are now and permanency placements will suffer.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Mettam
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